

understanding the importance of that workforce to the Nation on the one side, and on the other side, recognizing the sheer humanitarian character and responsibility we have as Senators and as those who form public policy.

Last year, on the United States-Mexican border, over 300 people died trying to make it across the border to identify with a job in this country. Many of them died of heat or lack of water in the deserts of Arizona and New Mexico near Mexico. That is a tragedy in its own right and a crisis in the making. But it is a tragedy that is a result of bad law that doesn't function well, and a law that will not function well until we adjust it and change it. That is why in working with all the interested groups over the last 5 years, TED KENNEDY, CHRIS CANNON and HOWARD BERMAN in the House, and I have produced the legislation that is at the desk. It has been vetted well. It has the support of a tremendous community of interest, from growers and employers on one side to agricultural workers on the other side. It has the support of a historic, bipartisan, and diverse national coalition. It is a bill that should be considered by this Congress. It is a bill that will pass the Senate because we now have over 60 cosponsors. It is a bill whose time has come, but it is a bill that possibly will not find time this year simply because of the shortness left in this session and the work that is necessary to be done?

I have worked with the leader and will continue to work with the leader to see if we can't find that window of opportunity to vote our expression on this most important issue, this year, sooner rather than later.

I have chosen this rule XIV process to make the legislation current at the desk to start the process to see if we might find that window of time in which to debate and vote on what I think is one of America's most important issues: immigration reform, controlling our borders, identifying undocumented people in this country, doing background checks, and the vetting of their character which is necessary to determine whether they are here and constructive, or whether they are here with a destructive thought in mind, a destructive thought against U.S. citizens, as we found on 9/11 a few years ago. Bringing the undocumented out of the shadows not only helps these workers who add to the economy and pay taxes, but it also would help our homeland security.

Many of us are determined to deal with this issue now. If we don't deal with this now, there is no question in my mind that I and others will make it a No. 1 issues in the next session of Congress. This is an issue that legislators cannot turn their backs on. It is an issue that cries out for resolution.

I believe S. 2823 is a proper solution to a major segment of that very large problem in this country.

I thank you and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALEXANDER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I found today to be a rather startling day by virtue of the news we have heard about what is happening with our troops in Iraq, what is happening to those who are in battle, those we are asking to carry on the battle for, let me call it, the liberation of Iraq, the opportunity to turn that society into a democratic society. This was brought to me by virtue of a couple of things that happened.

First, I participated with colleagues in the Governmental Affairs Committee markup of intelligence reform. It is a task that I and so many others on the committee, and throughout this body, take very seriously. We are upset about what happened on 9/11. We just commemorated the third anniversary of that horrific day. I went to a community in New Jersey, Middletown, NJ, and spoke to a group that included survivor families of 9/11. Thirty-seven of their residents lost their lives on that terrible day.

I walked around the memorial walk they established and saw pictures placed on granite stones of those who perished, with messages of love and longing for fathers who died, for brothers, for sisters, and for mothers who were killed that day, murdered. It digs further into the searing memory of that fateful day.

It reminds all of us about what our responsibilities are to try and get this country back on an even keel and to stop mourning the loss of young people because though we struggled hard to turn out our bill on intelligence reform this day, we did not complete it. But there is a fair degree of optimism that we will come to at least an initial description of what the intelligence-gathering mechanism might be.

Then this afternoon I heard President Bush say something that I found almost incomprehensible, extremely disturbing about our Nation's intelligence-gathering system. A few hours after the President spoke at the United Nations about why we went it alone in Iraq, President Bush was asked by a reporter about a CIA report that he received last month on the deteriorating situation—as a matter of fact, I believe it was in July—the deteriorating situation in Iraq which could even lead to a full-blown civil war.

The President dismissed the CIA report and said it was “just guessing.” Just guessing. Imagine, we are over 1,000 deaths, thousands of injuries, many of them very serious—if one

wants to see how serious, go down to Walter Reed Hospital and interview some of those who survived these attacks and see how they feel about what is taking place.

We are just guessing? The CIA is just guessing? If the President thinks our Nation's intelligence system is just guessing, then we are in trouble. The President's comments are a frightening sign that he is not living in reality and that he continues to ignore the truth about what is happening on the ground in Iraq.

I am going to quote what the President said this day, September 21:

The CIA laid out a—several scenarios that said, life could be lousy, life could be OK, life could be better, and they were just guessing as to what the conditions might be like.

Talk about casual dismissal of the trauma that family after family across this country faces. Over 33 former residents of New Jersey paid with their lives, all young. When I talk to those families or go to a funeral, there is such distress and grief.

I talked briefly before about these granite markers in a memorial built in Middletown, NJ. All of these granite memorials had legends or quotes from the family like “Daddy, I miss you”—quotes that were so tender. One said, “If love could have kept you alive, we would be having a good time right now.” They are the saddest things.

The reality is that these are not gravestones. These are granite markers done very gracefully throughout a walkway in this park with, again, a marble plate on top, an inscription from a family member, and a picture of the individual. Several men were pictured in tuxedos. I think the idea was to say that life was so full and so happy for these families.

When we look now at where we are, we see the President suggesting that maybe the CIA is just guessing as to what conditions might be like. President Bush ignored some intelligence reports he did not like before he went to war. Now when intelligence contradicts him, he dismisses the content of the report as mere guessing.

When the Central Intelligence Agency sends the President a report that lays out three scenarios for Iraq with the most rosy, the status quo, an average of 87 attacks a day against our troops, 1,035 dead to date, the President dismisses it as guesses? What an insult to the people in our country and to those families. I would like the President to stand in front of some of those survivors and say: Your son died. It is terrible. We made mistakes. The CIA was just guessing about what might be.

Look at where we are. Look at what is taking place. Today's Washington Post has a story about the comments of a general who defends the pace of the Iraqi training. Army LTG Walter Sharp, speaking to reporters at the Pentagon, also disputed the accuracy of some of the Democratic Presidential nominee's new criticism of the pace of training for Iraqi police.

I had the opportunity to visit in March with several other Senators—Senator LEVIN of Michigan; Senator ROCKEFELLER of West Virginia; Senator REED, who trained very thoroughly in the military at West Point; and Senator BINGAMAN—and the situation looked grim at that time. It was said that we are going to turn over governing to an interim council of Iraqis, and then we are going to have a vote in January of next year that would determine the more or less permanent structure at least for the next term of leadership in the country. Here we have these boldfaced statements that say he believes that based on what we will be able to do, there will be local control for the majority of the country by the end of December. Control is not just a matter of having Iraqi security forces in place, but also an assessment of the ability of local political leaders to govern and to oversee economic reconstruction efforts.

When I was in Iraq with four of my colleagues and we went to a police academy where they were training those who would soon be police officers, if memory serves me correctly, the pace was that they would train about 80 in 6 weeks. Since they needed over 50,000 more, I did a quick calculation and came up with the conclusion that it would be many years before they filled the full complement of those necessary. Then we find out that a lot of these people are entirely unqualified to take these tests: no driver's license, no capacity to read or write, no understanding of what the assignment is, a lot of washouts. Then they say by January the Iraqis are going to be able to take over? It is not fair. It is not fair to say these things because everybody knows it is not the truth by any stretch of the imagination.

The President has to stop ignoring the crisis our troops face in Iraq. He has to begin to speak in the real world, with real words, where things are not always good, where serious problems need to be addressed.

I find it so offensive that someone who served his country, received three Purple Hearts, a Silver Star, and a Bronze Star—now, I wore a uniform and I know what those medals mean. They mean a lot. I did not earn any, but I tried to do the job I knew best. I served in World War II. I was 18 when I enlisted. I know those medals are only given when the qualifications are attested to by medical officers who look at a wound and say, yes, this wound deserved the recognition of a Purple Heart, three of them. And now we want to talk about, well, how deep was the wound, was there any blood. When someone loses their hearing in battle, maybe there is no blood, but there is no hearing. It is still a wound, and a very serious one.

After going to a funeral of a young man from New Jersey at Arlington Cemetery, I went to Walter Reed afterward to meet with some of those who

had survived battle. There was one young man there who was sightless. He was there with his wife, and he said to me: Senator, I will not be able to see my 28 month old daughter again, but I just want to hold her. He said: I am going to try my best to get along in life. It was painful to witness, but imagine how painful it is to be the victim.

It is hypocritical when we compare the service of JOHN KERRY, though he was critical after the war, but he had the decency and the courage and the honor to serve his country when he was called on to do it. He did not question why, he did not question live or die, he said: I will do my duty to the best of my ability. The President's record does not indicate the same interest in serving. As a matter of fact, I saw a reproduction of an application for service in the military that said: I do not choose to serve in combat. He checked it off. That is all right. Everybody has a right to make those choices. But then to blacken someone else's character who did it and try to humiliate that individual so that he looks like he is unpatriotic, that he wants Saddam Hussein in there? It is atrocious. It is not honest. It is scandalous, and that is what is happening.

I offer a plea. Let President Bush and Vice President CHENEY talk about what they want to do for the country, talk about when we can see an end. They talk about JOHN KERRY not having a plan for getting us out of Iraq. Has anybody heard President Bush's plan for getting out of Iraq? No one. Smoke and mirrors, the ugliest type. One need only turn on the television, pick up the newspaper, listen to the radio and know things are falling apart in Iraq. We have heard it confirmed by distinguished colleagues from that side of the aisle, people who fought bravely, were in battle, know what it is like to see comrades die or escape with their lives, wounded in the process. They don't think things are going well. Look at the statement of Senator HAGEL of a couple of days ago, or Senator MCCAIN's statement. We see they see a gloomy picture ahead.

Today saw the second day of beheading of two Americans, savagery the likes of which we should never witness—cutting off a man's head.

I know one thing. This vulgar language has to stop. Shame on the President of the United States for belittling the record of someone who served so well and who did what he had to do, as his country requested it. If he had objections, he had objections, but it was after he served. It was after he was wounded three times and after he got the Silver Star for valor and after he got the Bronze Star for valor. It was afterward, but he served. First he did the thing he had to do. That brings a different level of experience than someone who only talks about how soft he is on defense. Patriotism? To suggest he is not a patriot? To suggest he would rather see Saddam Hussein in place? It

is outrageous and the American public should not believe it.

I call on veterans, who belong to whatever association, who served in whatever war, whether it was those who are still alive from World War I, World War II, Vietnam, Korea: Veterans, stand up and object. Don't let them say that about our comrade in arms. Don't let them question whether the wound was deep enough. You want to offend 270,000 people who got Purple Hearts in Vietnam? Should we go back and remeasure the depth of those wounds, see how much blood was let because they were hit by enemy fire?

It is not fair. I hope veterans across this country will disavow that kind of talk, that kind of suggestion, that kind of innuendo about someone who fought and disagreed with the policy—who first fought and then disagreed—in this sinister game being played by those who would challenge the heroism in the award of those medals which were certified by John Lehman, Secretary of the Navy, and another by the senior admiral in charge of the fleet in Vietnam. To challenge whether those medals were properly awarded is an outrage.

I think it is time to face up, tell the truth, discuss the issues and stop the name calling. Especially stop the accusation that someone who lost three limbs—as in the case of Max Cleland, who was defeated in his reelection attempt because it was said that he was soft on defense—wasn't patriotic enough. Maybe they were suggesting it is too bad he didn't lose the fourth limb. These are outrageous statements.

No, we cannot conduct ourselves like this. The American people see the hypocrisy. What it says is, if you can dismiss the truth and replace it with lies, replace it with distortion, replace it with insult, that is a way to build character for our young people. I defy that kind of performance, that kind of suggestion. It should not happen.

I am disturbed by the fact that two Americans had their heads cut off, punishment for something we don't understand. They were trying to bring democracy to a country that right now is not prepared for democracy. But we insist that that is what they want. Their country is being destroyed by insurgents. Their lives are being destroyed. However many we have lost, the Iraqis have lost far more.

The insurgents are intimidating those who would serve in the military and the Iraqi force. They are removing the incentive for those who want to be in law enforcement. They are totally intimidating those forces who would stand up and fight. Yet we continue to paint the rosy picture, like the President did a year ago May when he said "bring them on." They brought them on, all right. They brought them on as we never wanted to see them.

We have to stop this character assassination and these attacks. I hope we can muster the courage to do it in this place.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD P. RAMEY

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Army SSG Richard Ramey, from Perry Township, in Stark County, OH. He died on February 8, 2004, when his convoy was attacked in Mahmudiyah, Iraq—a village 20 miles south of Baghdad.

Richard lived life well. He made good choices. He never took the easy path. He never shied away from a challenge.

That is what drew him to the military. He pursued a career as a soldier knowing the possible dangers. Richard took on one of the most risky jobs in the Army. He took on the responsibility of explosive ordnance disposal. This meant, simply, that if someone found a bomb on the side of the road, or in a building, or anywhere, Richard's task was to disarm it.

Many of us would wonder why he volunteered for such a dangerous position. But Richard would have a simple answer. He did it to protect and ensure the safety of his comrades and the Iraqi people. He did it because he was never afraid to do what needed to be done.

Richard was born on November 6, 1976, to loving parents, Jerry and Julie Ramey. Jerry can still remember looking at Richard when he was in the hospital baby room. He could not help but laugh at Richard's curly brown hair with its frosted tips.

As a boy, Richard was known for hanging around the Perry Township fire station where Jerry was a volunteer fire investigator. Richard loved the excitement of the fire station and being there spending time with his dad.

At Perry High School in Massillon, OH, Richard made a lasting impression on all who met him. English teacher and assistant football coach Bob Kilpatrick remembered Richard as:

A good guy—a solid citizen. He came to class with his work done, came to practice ready to practice, and came to the game ready to play.

Richard was a great football player with an even greater work ethic. As an offensive guard and tackle, he was known for his hard hitting and determination to play despite an injury to his shoulder. Richard's coaches remember that even at practices in the summer heat, he would always be smiling.

Speaking of smiling, Richard was known for his sense of humor. One time, he described eggs as "liquid chickens" to his teacher—a proclaimed vegetarian. The teacher swore off eggs shortly thereafter.

Richard loved the outdoors. He loved to camp, hike, explore caves, and climb. He especially loved to fish. Richard's friends fondly recall how he always caught bigger fish than they did no matter what kind of bait they used or what kind of fishing pole they had.

Richard had the same passion for the military that he did for the outdoors.

Even as a youngster, Richard's parents knew he would join the military. On Halloween, he would dress up as Rambo or G.I. Joe. Friends remember that at sleepovers, Richard would make them watch his favorite movie, "Red Dawn"—a film about foreign armies taking over the United States.

In third grade, Richard's teacher asked the students to write a sentence about what they wanted to do when they grew up. Richard responded, "I will go to war and fight if I have to"—a motto he carried with him throughout his all too short life.

After high school, Richard joined the Army and entered the service on his mother's birthday. He carried on the military tradition of his family. His dad served 4 years in the Navy, and grandfather Bernard Richard, Sr. fought in World War II, notably at the Battle of the Bulge.

While Richard's mother knew that her son would follow his beliefs and do what he felt he needed to do, all she asked was that he call her every week—and he did. She said that "Richard loved to do his job. No matter where it would take him. He really felt deeply that he wanted to protect people who couldn't protect themselves." She understood that it took a special person to do what Richard did.

Richard's comrades loved him. They trusted him with their lives. And they had fun together. SSG Max Voelz, a member of Richard's unit, remembers the stories Richard would tell and the pranks he loved to play on people. In one instance, Richard filled an officer's room with balloons from the floor to the ceiling.

Richard served at the White House, in Kosovo, and in Egypt before his unit was transferred to Iraq. While in Iraq, he witnessed several tragic events. In December, Richard watched helplessly as one of his comrades and closest friends was killed while trying to defuse a bomb. Clearly shaken and understandably "numb," Richard called home for support from his parents. Shortly thereafter, Richard found himself in close proximity to another exploding bomb. Shrapnel hit his face and ruptured his eardrum. Through it all, Richard's unit became very close. They were family, both at home and in Iraq.

Despite these difficult times, Richard did not lose sight of his ultimate goal—to help those who could not help themselves. And that is why he was determined to continue his career in the military. While overseas, he enlisted for 6 more years and was looking forward to his next assignment in Alaska. His mom and dad were planning on driving him there.

Richard Ramey always will be remembered for his bravery and dedication to helping make the world a safer place. In the words of his father, Richard lived 80 years in 27—and in those 27, he made a difference.

In Massillon, OH, this past February, hundreds of soldiers, firefighters, police, Boy Scouts, sailors, and family

and friends paid their final respects to this American hero. Outside the church and along the funeral procession, many more braved the cold to show their support to the Ramey family by waving flags and holding signs. At Perry High School, a memorial plaque and photograph hangs in the hall as tribute to the school's brave alumnus.

Richard will forever live on in the hearts and minds of all those who had the privilege of knowing him, including his parents Jerry and Julie, sister Sarah, and brother-in-law, Nicholas. The Reverend Thomas Dyer, who spoke at Richard's funeral service, said it best:

[Richard] goes on in our memory with the powerful lesson to each one of us—to make of ourselves the best we can—to make a difference in our home and community.

Indeed, Richard made the best of himself and, in doing so, made a very real, very lasting difference in this world.

STAFF SERGEANT LESTER "BUDDY" KINNEY, II

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a young Ohioan who lost his life in the service of our country—a young Ohioan who dedicated himself to preserving the safety of his family, his friends, the Iraqi people, and his fellow Americans.

Army SSG Lester Kinney II was known to his family and friends by a nickname that exemplified his outlook on life, as well as the way he treated all who had the privilege of knowing him—and that nickname was "Buddy."

Buddy was born on February 28, 1976, and grew up in Muskingum County, OH. His mother, Barbara, fondly remembers his love for animals, classic cars, Johnny Cash, and blue-grass music. As a young boy, Buddy loved to play pranks on people, especially on Halloween, greatly increasing the popularity of his family's Zanesville home on the holiday.

Buddy attended John Glenn High School, where he played baseball and basketball. Described as "everybody's kid," Buddy was the kind of guy you wanted on your team. He was always a team player. And he was always in a good mood and could get along with anyone—and everyone. People liked Buddy Lester. As his former high school principal, Gary Lucas, said:

Everybody would be glad to have him as their son. He's the kind of kid you'd be glad to take home to meet your parents.

After graduating from high school in 1994, Buddy enlisted in the Army. His mother recalled that Buddy had always liked the "Be All You Can Be" commercials and was determined to join the Army from the time he was just 8 years old.

Buddy Kinney served in Afghanistan for most of 2003, where he earned a number of awards and decorations for his service and leadership. These include the Bronze Star, Expert Infantry Badge, Combat Infantry Badge, Army Service Ribbon, Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Parachutist Badge, Jumpmaster, and Air Assault Badge.